A RESOLUTION OPPOSING LEGISLATION WHICH MANDATES BACKEND REFERENDUM FOR PROPERTY TAX INCREASES BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SENECA VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT DECEMBER 1, 2015

#12-01-15-1

WHEREAS, Seneca Valley School District has learned that legislators are considering the inclusion of a mandatory backend referendum for school districts' property tax increases as part of the 2015-2016 budget negotiations; and

WHEREAS, imposing mandatory backend referendum requirement on school districts would prevent them from raising property taxes by the inflationary index in Act 1 of 2006 and deny their ability to seek exceptions from the Commonwealth to raise taxes to cover mandated budget cost drivers beyond their control – i.e. special education programs and pension contributions; and

WHEREAS, Seneca Valley School District has kept property tax increases within the Act 1 of 2006 index in four of the last ten fiscal years; and

WHEREAS Seneca Valley School District has used PDE approved referendum exceptions in six of the last ten fiscal years for increases in mandated special education expenditures and legislated increases in the PSERS employer contribution rates; and

WHEREAS, the mandates for special education have increased Seneca Valley School District's actual special education expenditures by an average of over $675,000 in each year of the last eight fiscal years; and

WHEREAS, the State's projection in the employer contribution rate for PSERS will cost the Seneca Valley School District and its taxpayers over $40 million between the 2015-2016 school year and the 2019-2020 school year; and

WHEREAS, if a voter referendum for a property tax increase fails to pass, it would present mission critical funding deficits that will effectively force major budget cuts of non-mandated programs – i.e athletics, music, non-mandated busing, and much needed building repairs.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of School Directors of the Seneca Valley School District calls upon the General Assembly to oppose any legislation that would mandate backend voter referendum for property tax increases and support maintaining Act 1 of 2006 and referendum exceptions in their current form.

Adopted this 1st day of December, 2015.